KEEPING IN

TOUCH

July 1996

"God has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy!"

– Psalm 126:3

We Have A New Home!

On June 18 Metropolitan Community Church of Los Angeles and the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches received title to our new home at 8704-8714 Santa Monica Boulevard

COVER STORY REV. ELDER DON EASTMAN

in West Hollywood, California. Closing of escrow, which began on June 5, proved to be more of a process than an event, filled with unexpected challenges like every previous step in this remarkable journey of faith. Each successive victory over seemingly insurmountable obstacles gives greater occasion for thanksgiving on this day.

Perhaps today it is good to remember an occasion in Israel, when David presented Solomon with the instructions and plan for the temple, and rejoiced because the people have given so generously and willingly. David prayed, "in your hand are power and might; and it is in your hand to make great and to give strength to all. Now, therefore our God, we thank you and praise your glorious name. O God, all this abundance that we have provided to build a house for your holy name, is from your hand, and all is yours."

■ **First the business** of signing final papers to complete the purchase, then a thanksgiving for the culmination of many miracles.

PHASE TWO BEGINNING TODAY!

The Next Step Begins...

Now that we have reached this first milestone, what's next? First, our capital campaign has successfully reached the goal of phase one. Starting with nothing, in less than a year we raised the needed $1,000,000 down payment toward the $3,800,000 purchase price. Today marks the beginning of phase two; our goal is to pay for the exciting development of this property, estimated to cost $1,800,000. Additionally, Rev. Elder Troy D. Perry has announced the goal of paying off the remaining loan of $2,800,000 within three years.

Development of this attractive complex will also occur in phases. The award-winning architectural team of Landa/Stevens in West Hollywood has produced an inspiring master plan for complete renovation of these facilities. The first phase will be completion of the sanctuary and first floor interior of MCCLA and second floor interior offices of the UFMCC. The cost for this first phase will be approximately $750,000 and construction time is estimated to be three months.

Phase two of the renovation will see completion of the beautiful memorial plaza, an international visitors center and

A FELLOWSHIP OF **ACTIVITY**

Congratulations to three members of MCC Knoxville, Tennessee, **Tim Bruce** who received the Splendid Life Award in honor of Bill Powell, a young man who lived life splendidly while living with AIDS; **Rick Sawyer** who received the Community Service Candlelight Memorial Award presented to the support person in the community who, by their words and deeds has provided support most faithfully to the PWA community; and **Don Minor** who received the NAPWA Award for his support of PWAs in the upper east Tennessee region. • Congratulations to **Rev. Brenda Hunt** who marked her 20th anniversary with UFMCC at the end of June. • Newly elected district committee members of the Great Lakes District are: **Shirley Hayward**, north area coordinator; **Rev. Peter Trabaris**, district clergy representative; **Victor Diaz**, district lay representative; **Joey Stambaugh**, district clerk. • **Nancy Fackrell**, CCCC administrator/data processor, celebrates her 10th anniversary with the UFMCC headquarters office this month. • Prayers are being sent to **Jack Hubbs** and all the extended family on the recent passing of **Lylian (Mother) Hubbs**. UFMCC will dearly miss this wonderful woman. • Prayers for **Erik Topp**, receptionist for UFMCC headquarters office, who has been out with health problems. • Congratulations to **Rev. Mel White**, UFMCC minister of justice, who was recognized as Man of the Year at the recent Christopher Street West celebration in Los Angeles. • **Marsha Stevens** was listed under "Weekend Picks" in *The Fresno Bee* recently for her performance at Wesley United Methodist Church. • OOPS! In the May/June issue we mistakenly listed **Rev. Sharon Sloat** as pastor of Holy Spirit MCC, Des Moines, Iowa. Rev. Sloat is actually on staff. • **St. Luke's MCC**, Jacksonville, Florida, is offering their first ever "Bible Camp" July 22-26. Children ages 4-12 will be welcome to an exciting experience that will include games, stories, art activities, movies and field trips. • Since going online in March 1996, the **UFMCC website** has had 6,409 hits. • Lay pastor **Edgar Mendoza** and **MCC Manila** invite anyone traveling to the Philippines to come and visit! They will be blessed to share their spiritual home and love of God with you! • There is a very new small group forming in **Puerto Rico**. Keep this work and **Pablo Navarro** in your prayers please.

the Edith Allen Perry Memorial Chapel, as well as MCCLA's second-floor ministry center. Phase three will complete the global technology center and the founder's suite in the UFMCC building. Progress with each of these phases will depend upon funds available, and the goal is full completion by July 1, 1999.

To reach these goals, Rev. Perry and Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson, along with Capital Campaign co-chairs Rev. David Farrell and Ivy Bottini, will build upon the successful efforts of the past year to launch a new campaign for the next three years. Expressing his gratitude for the prayers and support of saints throughout the Fellowship, Rev. Perry said, "God has rewarded our faithfulness with the success of this purchase. I firmly believe that God has only begun a great work in us!"

■ *Rev. Elder Eastman serves as Chair of the Joint Ownership Policies Committee, the group created by MCCLA and the UFMCC to oversee acquisition, development and management of the new facilities in West Hollywood.*

LEADERSHIP CONFERENCEBLESSING

Don't Miss the Blessing!

A Rite of Blessing will be the first of several dedicatory events for the new church home of MCC Los Angeles and global headquarters of the UFMCC. A brief ceremony at 8:00 am on Sunday, August 4, at the site of our new home will be one of the concluding events of the 1996 Leadership Conference. Transportation will be provided from the conference hotel to the West Hollywood location.

REACTIONJUSTICE

UFMCC Condemns Church Arson

The Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches has taken a strong stand on the arson fires that have recently destroyed churches throughout the United States. Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson stated, "The Metropolitan Community Churches around the world understand what is happening in the United States today. There is an obvious and clear pattern of racist arson of southern churches that has been going on for over 18 months. We stand in solidarity with our sisters and brothers in the historic African-American churches as they confront the racism, bigotry and hatred that results in the burning of churches in the south."

UFMCC founder, Rev. Elder Troy D. Perry, added, "We in MCC know what it is like to have our sanctuaries destroyed by hate. Ten percent of our churches have been destroyed or damaged by arson and vandalism over the 27 years of our ministry. We are not taken in by official announcements that these fires are coincidental and not connected. There is a clear pattern of racism in the United States today, just as there is a clear pattern of homophobia. We call upon all government officials at every level of government to do everything possible to identify and convict the perpetrators of these terrible fires."

Over the last 18 months, 32 southern U. S. churches, all of them African-American, have been destroyed by fire. According to the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA, "the 30 persons so far arrested and/or convicted for these crimes...[are] members of such racist groups as the Aryan Faction, Skinheads for White Justice and the Ku Klux Klan.'"

Rev. Perry and Rev. Wilson pledged support from the Metropolitan Community Churches, "in whatever ways we can help our sister churches in the south to prevent more racist arson attacks from happening."

■ **"More of a** process than an event" is how final closing of the new Fellowship Headquarters/MCCLA home was described. The process included several public hearings, approvals, loan negotiations and last-minute hitches. Rev. Elder Perry, Rev. Farrell, and Rev. Elder Wilson make it clear that it's all been worth it!

LAITYHISTORIC MEETING

Commission on Laity Meets in London

In March the Facilitating Council of the Commission on Laity convened its "trend setting" meeting at MCC London. The meeting was the first ever of the commission outside of the North American continent, and only the second outside the U.S.A.

The three-day meeting marked progress on two pieces of tangible ministry materials: A final draft of a trifold titled *A Handy Guide to UFMCC Words and Terms* was approved. A subcommittee committed to the production of audio tapes in several languages of the *Lay Delegate's Manual* and *The Priesthood of All Believers* trifold. The executive committee was expanded from four members to five with the addition of one at-large position. Len Shelton-Rymill agreed to continue as the media coordinator, Ron Bush accepted the responsibilities of clerk, and Mel Johnson will pursue the development of resources.

Through a unanimous decision the Commission on Laity moved to petition General Council for a forum focusing on identifying avenues for defining lay ministry, for developing laity programs, and for empowering laity leadership.

The meetings concluded with a Saturday evening worship service conducted by members of several MCC congregations from all over England.

The next meeting has been set for October 4-7, 1996, at Wildwood Retreat Center, Guerneville, California. This, too, sets a milestone in that it marks the first ever commission gathering in a retreat setting. Scheduled activities are being planned for spouses, and other laity interested in a weekend vacation. The commission has a fixed charge, therefore, the larger the number of attendees the lower the cost per individual. For additional information on attending the retreat, laity should contact their district lay representative.

LEADERSHIP CONFERENCEDEADLINE

Leadership Conference Pre-Registration Deadline Approaches

UFMCC Leadership Conference for 1996 will offer many great opportunities for learning this year. The conference will be held August 1-4 at the Burbank Hilton Hotel in Burbank, California. Pre-conference events include: FFO workshops, Monday through Wednesday, July 29-31; mid-sized church meetings, Tuesday and Wednesday, July 30-31; Board of Ordained Ministry training of chairs and steering committee meeting, Tuesday and Wednesday, July 30-31; and judiciary training on Wednesday, July 31.

Leadership Conference itself will be filled with guest speakers such as Bishop Leontine Kelly, Tex Sample, Marsha E. Raulston, Rev. Sherman Hicks, and Rev. Eric Law. Pre-registration for the conference will be accepted by mail until July 15 for $150. After that date, on-site registration is $170.

After-Conference events will include: supervising clergy training by Samaritan Institute on Monday through Wednesday, August 5-7; and Board of Elders meetings, Tuesday through Thursday, August 6-8.

Come and enjoy a conference filled with training opportunities for everyone.

DARROL STEPHENSIN MEMORY

On June 12, 1996, at 11:10 am, in Great Falls, Cascade County Montana, Darrol Stephens finished his walk to the Light and his solitary walk between two worlds in the place he had chosen to be: the home of Rev. Gina L. Hartung and Irene M. Crawford. Darrol's spouse Rev. Bob Arthur, district coordinator of the Mountains and Plains District, and Rev. Gina Hartung were with Darrol at the moment of passing. Darrol was born on September 13, 1955 in Los Angeles, California, the son of Clarence and Maxine Stephens. Darrol's brother, Dwayne preceded him in death from AIDS in 1990. Besides his parents, he is survived by his spouse, Rev. Bob Arthur, Terri Arthur and her spouse Milly, and his brothers: Mark, his wife Francine; and Clarence Jr., his wife Laurie; his paternal grandmother who celebrated 100 years of life this past May, and several nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death also by his first lover, who died last fall of AIDS. Darrol had finished schools in Los Angeles and taken course work in preparation to be a travel agent. He was enamored with anything to do with transportation: busses, trains, planes. "It was his life," said Rev. Arthur. Memorial services for Darrol were held at MCC Shepherd of the Plains, Great Falls, Montana on June 21st.

LEADERSHIP CONFERENCEBERNIE BARBOUR

MDISC Integral to Leadership Conference

UFMCC Leadership Conference and Department of People of Colors Leadership Conference have for the past several years been held one after the other. One of my long-held visions has been that we would one day have a single UFMCC/DPOC Leadership Conference. This year marks that beginning! The 1996 UFMCC Leadership Conference is being jointly sponsored with the Ministry of Diversity in Spiritual Community. This is only the beginning: I'll start lobbying for more at and after this first success. This will become our grand gathering between World Jubilees.

We who are involved in the Ministry of Diversity in Spiritual Community are excited about what this conference will be offering. In 1992, Bishop Leontine Kelly was the keynote speaker at our conference in Phoenix. With "Into Action" as our clarion call, we asked Rev. Eric Law to facilitate his institute entitled "Process for Including and Empowering People of Colors for Local Church Leadership." This institute will examine questions of culture and cultural differences, how differences in culture affect interactions, and how these cultural differences specifically affect people of colors' experiences in leadership. I have talked with Rev. Law and found him to be insightful and a gentle spirit. Those who attend will leave with not only the tools, but a specific plan which you can immediately begin applying at your local church.

Because our global ministry and family are growing, we are very excited to be able to offer several workshops in Spanish at this Leadership Conference. Some of the workshop titles are: El ldloma inclusivo en Nuestras Iglesias; Empezando Nuevas iglesias/equipos Pastorales; Desarollando Nuestra Propia Teologia; Hacia un Ministero Espiritual VIH/SIDA; Ministerio de Musica; Comartiendo Nuestro Trabajos. Some of the facilitators will be Rev. Jorge Sosa, Ramon Flores, Rev. Jorge Delgado, Pablo Navarro, and Cathy Spiess. Other workshop offerings include: How to do Outreach to Communities of Color, Listening to Diversity, Issues for Multicultural Congregations, Part I & II of Face to Face: a Dialogue of Racism, and Building Coalitions with People of Color Congregations. Facilitators will include Mignon Jackson, Ramon Flores, Jean Strickland, Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson, and Bernie Barbour.

I am excited about this Leadership Conference and know we will all receive a mighty blessing in Burbank. The Ministry of Diversity in Spiritual Community hopes to see you there. Registration forms can be found on the outside of this newsletter. For more information you can contact the UFMCC headquarters office at 213/464-5100.

■ **Commission of Laity** members take a break from business in London. From left, Danny Gonzalez, James Tallent, Len Shelton-Rymill, and Ron Bush.

HIV/AIDSSTRATEGY

Planning Meeting for AIDS Ministry

Consultants from outside the UFMCC will be joining key UFMCC personnel for a long-range planning meeting for UFMCC AIDS Ministry. The meeting will be held in Los Angeles on July 26 and 27.

The invited consultants include Eric Rofes, author of *Reviving the Tribe*; Sallie Perryman of the AIDS Institute of New York; and Rev. Ken South, executive director of the U.S. AIDS National Interfaith Network. Rev. Elder Don Eastman, Rev. Jim Mitulski, and Ravi Verma will be joining the group to advise Rev. Steve Pieters on future directions for UFMCC AIDS Ministry.

EDUCATIONORDINATION

'96 Samaritan Residential Program

Samaritan Institute for Religious Studies is preparing for the 1996 UFMCC Polity/Practics program to be held on the campus of North Texas University at Denton, Texas, beginning Monday, July 8, 1996.

UFMCC Polity/Practics is a two-week residential program which promotes leadership excellence for liberating, multifaceted ministry within

DOING**JUSTICE**

Rev. Mel White

As we were warned, same-sex marriage has become the lightning rod issue in this U. S. election year. The so-called "Defense of Marriage Act" now pending before the U.S. Congress, is just another attempt by religious and political extremists to force their anti-homosexual agenda on the nation. I am hoping the two, succinct paragraphs that follow, will assist you in writing the sermons, the speeches, the press releases, and the bulletin articles that you will have to prepare in defense of same-sex marriage in your community.

The Marriage Rite: Same-sex marriage is an ancient and honorable tradition, practiced today as it has been for more than 1,000 years. From the beginning of our Universal Fellowship, our founder, Rev. Elder Troy Perry, has insisted that same-sex unions be performed and honored in our churches. Now, tens of thousands of same-sex marriages are also being performed (in public and private) by courageous and enlightened Protestant, Jewish and even Catholic clergy. Already, millions of lesbian and gay Americans live together as married couples, in loving, committed, long-term relationships. Nothing the president, the congress, or the courts can decide will stop lesbian and gay Americans from falling in love and getting married. Oscar Hammerstein said it best: "Love and marriage go together like a horse and carriage. You can't have one without the other." We have this rite and will continue to celebrate it, even in the face of bigotry and discrimination.

The Marriage Rights: Unfortunately, same-sex marriage commitments have no legal standing. Lesbians and gays are married in the sight of their Creator and in the sight of their friends and families, but we have no legal rights to support or protect our relationships. In spite of our obvious commitment to each other, in spite of the homes and families we build together, in spite of the contributions we make to our communities and the nation, the 170 legal rights that go automatically with heterosexual marriage have been withheld from us. The current debate over the "Defense of Marriage Act" (limiting marriage to heterosexual couples) now before the U.S. Congress is NOT about marriage. It is about the immoral and unconstitutional practice of withholding equal rights from millions of Americans on the basis of sexual orientation alone.

For a UFMCC press release and our four page JusticeNet bulletin, contact Elsa Martinez at UFMCC headquarters. For copies of The Marriage Resolution, supporting same-sex unions, and for valuable resources to assist you and your congregation in doing justice around this issue, contact Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, the Marriage Project, 212/995-8585.

A Same-Sex Marriage Commitment Prayer from the 11th Century: "For as much as Thou, O Creator, art merciful and loving, who didst establish humankind after thine image and likeness, who didst deem it meet that thy holy apostles, Philip and Bartholomew be united, bound one unto the other not by nature but by faith and the spirit. As thou didst find the holy martyrs Serge and Bacchus worthy to be united together, bless also these thy servants joined together not by the condition of nature but by faith and in the mode of the spirit granting unto them peace and love and oneness of mind. Cleanse from their hearts every stain and impurity and vouchsafe unto them to love one another without hatred and without scandal all the days of their lives... (See John Boswell's book, *Same-Sex Unions in Premodern Europe*, Villard Books, 1994, page 295.)

the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches. This program is completed as part of the experiential component of preparation for ordination in the UFMCC. Guest faculty for this year's program include Dr. Elias Farajaje-Jones, Rev. Dr. Mel White, Rev. Michael Piazza, and Rev. Elder Troy Perry.

Thirty-six students are expected to attend this year. Seventeen percent of the students are African-American or Hispanic, 39 percent are women. Successful completion of the program will earn the students Polity/Practics certification which must be included in each candidate's application for ordination.

GLOBAL OUTREACHTRANSITIONS

World Community Builders Disbands

During a special meeting held May 7 with Stephen Fund, resident elders, and the administrator of Global Outreach, the decision was made to disband World Community Builders. Due to recent decisions, the opportunity to continue this kind of ministry has been affected and ongoing financial challenges have made it difficult for World Community Builders to survive these changes.

We wish to extend our deepest gratitude to Stephen Fund and the many other MCC participants who helped to make World Community Builders such a creative, "experiment in ministry." Fund says he began this ministry as an opportunity to explore the possibility and to create an experiment in creative missionary work within the UFMCC. Those of you who participated know that it was indeed an avenue for growth and a creative and successful endeavor in accomplishing this original goal. Thank you, Stephen, for your leadership and your willingness to serve.

PEP/MCCCASE STUDY

PEP Program Flourishes in Utah

The Peer Education Program of Metropolitan Community Churches is successfully providing HIV education to youth at risk in Northern Utah, including Box Elder, Cache, and Rich counties.

This program is funded by a grant from the Utah Department of Health, Bureau of HIV/AIDS, and is being administered by MCC Bridgerland in Logan, Utah, with the cooperation of the Cache Valley AIDS Council.

On June 29, a four-hour informational workshop was held to introduce the community to the program, to MCC, and to the Cache Valley AIDS Council. In addition, the workshop covered the need for ongoing HIV education in Northern Utah, the philosophy of peer education programs, and an overview of the PEP/MCC curriculum, which includes training in negotiation skills, refusal skills, and harm reduction techniques.

Recent graduates of the peer education training course presented a demonstration for workshop participants, who included school administrators, PTA leaders, health and science teachers, and area clergy.

PEP/MCC was created, published and distributed in 1995 by UFMCC AIDS Ministry, in cooperation with the Peer Education Program of Los Angeles, as a resource for local churches to create an HIV prevention program for youth. The project was funded in part by a grant from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, through the U.S. AIDS National Interfaith Network.

DISTRICTSSOUTH CENTRAL

Rymill Receives First Memorial Award

Len Shelton-Rymill, lay representative for the South Central District, was awarded the first ever Dr. Tom Reveley Memorial Award For Excellency in Lay Ministry in May at the district's conference in Austin, Texas. Shelton-Rymill was recognized for his service of ten years as a member of the district committee, and for his ministry with the laity programs of the district.

The award memorializes the name of Dr. Reveley who served the district as treasurer and clerk for thirteen years before his retirement in 1994. Shelton-Rymill and Reveley were close friends.

"Tom was my good buddy and mentor. The honor of this award is special for me as it helps bring closure to my loss. I will live each day with the intention of honoring the ministry it represents," said Len.

The District Committee has determined the award will be given annually to a deserving lay individual who has offered service to the district.

GLOBAL OUTREACH REV. JUDY DAHL

What Would We Do Without You?

When one of us asks, another responds. We are a great group! Just last month I mentioned a great need we had for our UFMCC materials to be translated into Spanish. Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson went to the South Central District Conference and raised over $1,000 in cash and gifts in kind! Then just last week, Maranatha Fellowship MCC of Houston sent a check for $500 for Spanish translation of documents. Now we can go to print and get some of our good news out there where it belongs!

Maranatha Fellowship MCC is a church with a heart and passion for our global community. Every month they send a contribution for Global Outreach. They pray about how God wants them to reach out, they listen and then they respond. They seem to have an inner sense of what is needed and their response is given in joy and the conviction of God's direction. I am ever grateful to Maranatha Fellowship for listening and then acting as God's special agents for Global Outreach. They are a personal inspiration to me and they help to make a way for others around the globe. Watch out UFMCC, Maranatha is bound to be blessed beyond recognition!

And while I'm in the grateful mode, let me publically acknowledge some of our other faithful churches. The Cathedral of Hope MCC asked me to join them in April for their World Missions Weekend and they raised close to $3,000 for Global Outreach. Thanks to the Cathedral of Hope MCC. MCC Seattle sends a monthly contribution to our work in Cuernavaca! MCCDC just sent their annual contribution of nearly $2,000! May God shine upon you in a big way! Some other churches which give monthly to our global churches are: The Church of the Resurrection in Chicago, Holy Cross MCC of Pensacola, Florida, MCC Charleston, South Carolina, MCC St. Louis, MCC Louisville, MCC Mobile, Alabama, MCC Knoxville, to name a few. In addition, there are several individuals who give on a regular basis. Thank you so much! What would we do without you!?

HIV/AIDS MEDITATION

New Meditation Tape

Marsha Stevens, through B.A.L.M. Publishing, has issued a new tape of Christian music and meditation, called *Rest.* Popular UFMCC musician and composer Danny Ray provides musical renditions of favorite praise choruses, including *You Are My Hiding Place, This Is Holy Ground, Seek Ye First* and 17 others. Over the music, Marsha reads a meditation, a relaxation exercise, a prayer, and scripture selections from *The Message.*

Marsha Stevens is the famed gospel singer/composer, who has performed throughout the UFMCC. She is the first lay recipient of the Board of Elders' Award for Excellence in Evangelism, the "Purple Grass Award," and has five solo albums and a concert video available.

Those who have heard the tape have high praise for its timeliness and effectiveness. Deb Hardy, a music director and person living with AIDS, states, "Nothing has calmed me more or given me courage to fight harder than Marsha's relaxation tape. Each time it reminds me of the power of God and of my own body to work together for healing."

Rev. Steve Pieters of UFMCC AIDS Ministry says, "At last a Christian relaxation and meditation tape I can recommend for anyone living with HIV/AIDS or any life-threatening condition. I recommend it for all of us searching for God's healing in our lives."

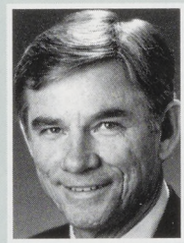
The tape is available for $10 from B.A.L.M. Publishing, P.O.Box 1981, Costa Mesa, CA 92628, or call 714/641-8968.

FEATURED AT **LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE**

Leadership Conference Featured Speakers

The deadline for pre-registration has been extended until July 15, so make your plans now to attend 1996 Leadership Conference in Burbank, August 1 through 4.

Bishop Leontine Kelley
Opening Address



Tex Sample
Keynote Plenary

Marsha Raulston
Plenary: A Woman's Place

Rev. Eric H. F. Law
Institute: Leadership for a Global Generation: Process for Including and Empowering People of Colors for Local Church Leadership

Garland Pierce
Institute: Building a Bridge to the Future: Ministering to and with Young Adults

Rev. Sherman Hicks
Guest Preacher

ORDINATION CONGRATULATIONS

Granted Ordination

The following people were recently granted ordination in the UFMCC:

Australian District:
Vera Bourne, Dorroughby, NSW
Robert Clark, Sydney, NSW
John Fowler, Melbourne, VICT
Ivor Holmans, Fortitude Valley,QLD
Greg Smith, Darlinghurst, NSW

European District:
Roy Beaney, London, England
Caroline Blanco, Paris, France
Jane Clarke, London, England
Stewart Harrison, Bournemouth, England
James McManus, Newcastle, England
Michael Muffett, London, England
Doreen Shambrook, Kent, England

Eastern Canadian District:
Jeremiah Lyon, Toronto, Ontario
Diane Fisher, Belleville, Ontario
Evan LeBlanc, Windsor, Ontario
Marcia Perryman, Barrie, Ontario

Great Lakes District:
Wayne Bradley, Chicago, IL
Lew Broyles, Milwaukee, WI
Donna J. Bruner, Jeffersonville, IN
Shane Desautels, Chicago, IL
Ken Hull Sr., Green Bay, WI
Frances Mayes, Whitmore Lake, MI
Bradley Mickelson, Chicago, IL
Phyllis Motta, Paducah, KY
Christine Pasinski, Racine, WI
Catherine Porter, Louisville, KY
Elaine Thomas, Toledo, OH
Rex VanAlstine, Lexington, KY

Gulf Lower Atlantic District:
Mel Bailey, Savannah, GA
Emily Bel, Decatur, GA
Chip Carson, Atlanta, GA
John Hankins, Atlanta, GA
Polly Ireland, Chattanooga, TN
Marianne McPherson, Huntsville, AL
Vicky Mitchusson, Nashville, TN
Glenna Shepherd, Stone Mtn, GA
Susan Tedder, Charlotte, NC
Pat Voelker, Columbia, SC

Mid-Atlantic District:
Christen Chew, Lancaster, PA
Gail Hicks, Falls Church, VA
Phillip Mathews, Washington, DC
Judith Maynard-Goodwin, Richmond, VA
Jeffrey Padgett, Richmond, VA
William Rethford, Roanoke, VA
R. David Smith, Baltimore, MD
Carol Wier, Norfolk, VA
Clay H. Witt, Falls Church, VA
Herbert Evans, Philadelphia, PA

Mountains & Plains District:
Anthony Freeman, Denver, CO
James L. Forsythe, Denver, CO
Bob Goss, St. Louis, MO
Paul Graetz, Minneapolis, MN
Gina Hartung, Great Falls, MT
Mark Lee, Ft. Collins, CO
Denise Leopold, Ogden, KS
C. Earle Lewis, Omaha, NE
Barbara Maclennan, Silesia, MT
Jeremy McLeod, Denver, CO
Susan Ann Phillips, Rosemount, MN
David W. Regnaud, Las Vegas, NV
Donald Reusch, Sioux Falls, SD
Sharon Sloat, Des Moines, IA
Mark Williams, Springfield, MO
Bradley Wishon, St. Louis, MO
Claudia Wolf, Pueblo, CO

Northeast District:
William E. Gordon, Augusta, ME
Ronnie Helms, Rochester, NY
Timothy Koch, Boston, MA

Top 20 Tithes

May 1996

1. Cathedral of Hope MCC, Dallas, TX 7,685.37
2. MCC of the Resurrection, Houston, TX 2,602.49
3. Sunshine Cathedral MCC, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 2,492.95
4. MCC Washington, Washington, DC 2,215.35
5. King of Peace MCC, St. Petersburg, FL 2,060.34
6. St. Luke's MCC, Jacksonville, FL 1,666.67
7. MCC San Francisco, San Francisco, CA 1,474.72
8. MCC of the Rockies, Denver, CO 1,225.05
9. First MCC of Atlanta, Atlanta, GA 1,194.44
10. MCC Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA 1,191.96
11. MCC Richmond, Richmond, VA 1,153.95
12. Maranatha Fellowship MCC, Houston, TX 1,126.22
13. MCC New York, New York City, NY 1,097.58
14. St. John's MCC, Raleigh, NC 1,064.15
15. MCC Long Beach, Long Beach, CA 1,022.76
16. Holy Cross MCC, Pensacola, FL 968.53
17. MCC Baltimore, Baltimore, MD 963.49
18. Open Door MCC, Boyds, MD 876.11
19. MCC Charleston, Charleston, SC 850.41
20. Harvest MCC, Denton, TX 844.46

(These figures reflect the 10 percent of each local church's monthly income that is reported to Fellowship headquarters.)

Top 20 Per Capita

May 1996

1. MCC of the Disciples, Washington, DC 42.82
2. Gentle Souls MCC, Kansas City, MO 37.75
3. MCC of Greater Hayward, San Lorenzo, CA 36.98
4. Maranatha Fellowship MCC, Houston, TX 34.65
5. MCC Long Beach, Long Beach, CA 32.16
6. MCC of the Pomona Valley, Claremont, CA 31.31
7. MCC of the Gentle Shepherd, Vancouver, WA 30.25
8. MCC Baltimore, Baltimore, MD 28.93
9. New Hope! MCC, Santa Rosa, CA 27.57
10. New Life MCC, Charlotte, NC 27.04
11. Lexington's MCC, Lexington, KY 26.80
12. River of Life MCC, Richland, WA 26.79
13. Eternal Light MCC, Lacey, WA 26.72
14. Holy Covenant MCC, Hinsdale, IL 26.03
15. Open Arms MCC, Rochester, NY 25.57
16. Church of the Resurrection MCC, Chicago, IL 24.92
17. MCC Huntsville, Huntsville, AL 24.59
18. New Creation MCC, Columbus, OH 24.06
19. Holy Cross MCC, Pensacola, FL 23.57
20. MCC With A Vision, Longview, TX 22.92

(These figures reflect the average individual weekly offerings to the local church.)

Northwest District:
Leslie Addison, Oakland, CA
Brenda Blizzard, Seattle, WA
Roberta Booth, Tacoma, WA
Lea Brown, San Francisco, CA
Roy Cole, Portland, OR
Karen A. Foster, San Francisco, CA
Jean Hart, Felton, CA
Edward Knisley, Anchorage, AK
Fran Little Bear, Sacramento, CA
Jodi Mekkers, Eugene, OR
Terri Miller, Sacramento, CA
Jane Newall, Yakima, WA
Penny Nixon, San Francisco, CA
Berry Pedersen, San Rafael, CA
Francis Scarlett, San Francisco, CA
Lynne Scarper, San Jose, CA
Cindy Solomon, Salt Lake City, UT
Cheri Starchman, Seattle, WA
Julie Two Suess-Pierce, Portland, OR
Sharna Sutherin, San Francisco, CA

South Central District:
Vicki Anderson, Amarillo, TX
Dexter Brecht, New Orleans, LA
Barbara Freeman, Little Rock, AR
Jon Haack, Dallas, TX
Susan B. Heiskell, Dallas, TX
Sherry Hilliard, Grand Prairie, TX
Mary Hinsey, Longview, TX
C. Lynn Johnson, Ft. Worth, TX
Lou Ann Jordan, Denton, TX
Kaye Lee, Oklahoma City, OK
Sandy O'Steen, Corpus Christi, TX
Richard Schisler, El Paso, TX
Beverly Stephenson, Lafayette, LA
Irene Travis, Dallas, TX
Alice K. Urbanowicz, Austin, TX
Buddy Vess, Waco, TX
Margaret Walker, Wichita Falls, TX
Kermie Wohlenhaus, Eureka Springs, AR

Southeast District:
Teena Carpenter, St. Petersburg, FL
Carlos Cruz, Port Charlotte, FL
Kenneth Hull II, Jacksonville, FL
Ruth Jensen, Jacksonville, FL
Gus Kein, Sarasota, FL
Jill Nelson, Tamarac, FL
David Park, Miami, FL
Joseph Scholtes, St. Petersburg, FL
Steve Steele, Daytona Beach, FL

Southwest District:
Dana Cagle, Los Angeles, CA
Jorge Delgado, Los Angeles, CA
Judy Gingrich, Ventura, CA
Barbara Haynes, Los Angeles, CA
Kenneth Kerr, Los Angeles, CA
Pat Langlois, Albuquerque, NM
Maureen Mackey, Las Vegas, NV
Kathleen Patrick, Mira Loma, CA
Joseph Piccari, Carpenteria, CA
Joan M. Saniuk, Ventura, CA
Susan Sawyer-Hilty, Whittier, CA
Sandra Turnbull, Long Beach, CA
Dawn Wilder, Los Angeles, CA
Sandra Williams, Los Angeles, CA

MCC Churches Have Been Hit Hard by AIDS...

We Can Learn from Our Experience!

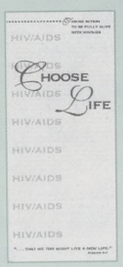
Tap into UFMCC's vast experience with AIDS ministry. Please review our full range of resources, including a proven HIV prevention program for youth, how-to manuals, one with four models of AIDS ministry for the local church, and the other a guide to holding a spiritual support group.

For HIV Prevention

The Peer Education Program of Metropolitan Community Churches is based on the highly successful Peer Education Program of Los Angeles, which has spawned similar programs around the world. Through this project, young people learn how to teach other young people about HIV transmission and prevention.

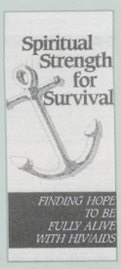
☐ AM0011 $35.00

For Persons Living with AIDS



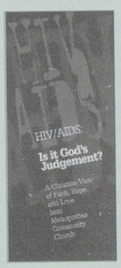
Choose Life 12 practical action steps for being fully alive with HIV/AIDS, this pamphlet has been widely distributed in churches, AIDS agencies, and conferences, and is considered "one of the best religious resources for persons living with HIV/AIDS."

☐ BR0013 0.20 cents



Spiritual Strength for Survival 10 principles of behavior and attitude are related to scripture and the experience of longterm survivors. This pamphlet is the basis for the popular "Spiritual Strength for Survival Support Groups."

☐ BR0009 0.20 cents



HIV/AIDS: Is It God's Judgement? A theological discussion of a challenging issue for every person of faith. The clear answer in this pamphlet is "NO!"

☐ BR0006 0.20 cents

For AIDS Ministry in Local Churches

Christian Caring A how-to manual with four models of AIDS ministry for the local church. Written by Rev. Paul Tucker, director of Christian Caring at Cathedral of Hope Metropolitan Community Church, the world's largest church serving the gay and lesbian community.

☐ BP0064 $8.00

Spiritual Strength for Survival Support Group Manual A how-to manual for a spiritual support group, based on the 10 principles of the popular pamphlet for persons living with HIV/AIDS. The pamphlet and manual were written by Rev. Steve Pieters, long-term survivor of AIDS, and Director of UFMCC AIDS Ministry.

☐ BP0024 $8.00

Being A Blessing

54 Ways You Can Help People Living with AIDS
Rabbi Harris R. Goldstein

"Firmly grounded in traditional Jewish values, this book offers compassionate and comprehensive approaches to AIDS services and education, which any congregation can accomplish. I have a feeling that if every community of faith took it upon themselves to follow the advice of *Being a Blessing*, the quality of life for all persons living with AIDS would improve dramatically." -- *Rev. A. Stephen Pieters, UFMCC AIDS Ministry.*

☐ BP9601 $12.95

AIDS and the Sleeping Church

Patricia L. Hoffman

Confronted by her own feelings of helplessness in the face of aging and ill health, Patricia Hoffman, a longtime activist and writer on justice issues, felt drawn to spend time with AIDS patients. This is a personal journal, kept when she visited patients at Daniel Freeman Marina Hospital at Marina Del Rey in Los Angeles. Hoffman not only reveals profound insights for our own lives but also sensitively bridges the gap between the institutional church's rejection of those infected with AIDS and the need for simple unassuming acts of love for those whom God has created.

☐ BP9602 $12.95

Send to:
Resource Center
5300 Santa Monica Blvd., Suite 304
Los Angeles, CA 90029
213/464-5100 Fax 213/464-2123

Order Total _____
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Calif. residents add 8.25% sales tax _____
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Order Total	Shipping
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$ 2.01 to 5.00	1.95
$ 5.01 to 10.00	2.95
$10.01 to 20.00	3.95
$ 20.01 to 40.00	4.95

Order Total	Shipping
$ 40.01 to 60.00	5.95
$ 60.01 to 80.00	7.95
$ 80.01 to 100.00	8.95
$100.01 to 120.00	9.95

Outside U.S.: Actual shipping costs charged, call for costs.

■ **Posters for World Peace** has become a Global Outreach fundraiser.

GLOBAL OUTREACH REV. JUDY DAHL

Posters for World Peace

Perhaps one global goal which each of us values is world peace. We long for a planet without barriers in which to create love and community. Translesbigay people seek rest from discrimination and oppression... in many ways we are the last minority and the forerunners of global healing. Even within our own house we continue to build a place where everyone is valued and appreciated, each in their own culture and color and tongue. While the UFMCC began in the USA, God has called us out to journey with others in many lands. We know this and we continue to stretch ourselves around the globe. One very tangible way in which we can do this is to create comfort and familiarity for those in our community who share a common language other than English. Several languages are spoken within the UFMCC community. Spanish is perhaps the second most widely spoken language among our people. Several of our Spanish-speaking leaders have come together to create a common connection for Spanish speaking people from within the UFMCC. In order to begin this development, it was immediately known that funds would be required to meet this need.

This Global Outreach fundraising event is spearheaded by Ramon Flores of San Diego, Rev. Jorge Delgado of MCC Los Angeles, and Pablo Navarro of Puerto Rico. We hope to raise enough money to bring Spanish-speaking people from around the globe to our Leadership Conference in August. This full-color poster is entitled, "Visualize World Peace," and costs $25 each.

The artist, Hal Marcus, is a native of El Paso, Texas. Marcus has donated this most recent poster for our use. "Visualize World Peace" was unveiled at the national Peace Corps Association Conference, held in Austin, Texas in August 1995. Marcus spent eight months working on the original 6x12 canvas mural depicting "a world at peace." The original thought for this work began during a trip to Israel where he met several rabbis who felt confidant we are "getting ready for peace." This mural shows people working in harmony; a clean, bright place looking towards the future. The painting is bordered by flags of each country with active Peace Corps participation. Marcus states he is, "into the concept of using this image as a "curandero," a healer, to help people visualize peace."

Why not consider purchasing this image of world peace to help heal your church or home? Join us in visualizing a world filled with harmony while helping our Spanish-speaking friends to feel more connected to the UFMCC.

If you are interested in purchasing posters for a district conference, for individual purchase or for gifts, please call Ramon at 619/281-3548 or send $25 plus a $3 shipping charge (checks made out to Global Outreach UFMCC) to: Post Office Box 161016, San Diego, California 92176. If you have further requests or questions, please contact Rev. Judy Dahl at the UFMCC headquarters 213/464-5100.

PROGRESS HUMAN RIGHTS

Important Victories

Canada: The Federal Parliament has passed an amendment to the Human Rights Act, which adds the words "Sexual Orientation" to the list of protected rights (race, gender, etc.). Rev. Marcie Wexler, District Coordinator, Eastern Canadian District, stated "Although we have major work to do on our Charter of Rights and Freedoms, wherein gay and lesbian couples have rights to pensions, etc. we'll be protected. I believe we have taken a wonderful step."

United States: The Supreme Court ruled 6-3 against Colorado's anti-gay/lesbian law. Several hundred people gathered to celebrate the decision in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Rev. Nori Rost, pastor of Pikes Peak MCC said, "It was a clear statement that our country will not tolerate legalized bigotry and discrimination."

HANDS ON REV. SANDRA ROBINSON

Sources for Leadership Training

Leadership training is the new "mantra" of les/gay/bi/tran communities. I believe that the energy of this focus is born

from the ecumenical movement of the 1980's which surged in our communities. It is also a direct response to the stubborn persistence of homophobia. We must be about the business of intentionally training our own leadership or remain adrift in the unnecessary sufferings of oppression.

As a denomination we have learned what competent leadership can achieve.

The Samaritan Institute for Religious Studies has made leadership training the central focus of its mission. Toward that goal we have discovered many useful resources in our curricular research. Here are some which may be helpful:

African-American Christian Worship Costen, Melva Wilson, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993. Dr. Costen traces the impact of culture on the evolution of forms and styles of worship. How were African-Americans influenced by various denominations? How did African-American denominations emerge? What roles do preaching, prayer, and music play in worship?

A Male/Female Continuum, Path to Colleagueship Pierce, Carol, David Wagner, and Bill Page Expanded Edition. Laconia, NH: New Dynamics, 1994. *If you force people to be the same, the only way left for them to be different is to try to get on top of one another.* – Maenka West African tribal saying.

The authors are innovators in addressing male/female issues in organizations. The foundation of their approach is the claiming of creative power through the developmental journeys of women and men.

The Teaching Church: Moving Christian Education to Center Stage Roehikepartain, Eugene C. Nashville; Abington Press, 1993. Careful, this is not about UFMCC Teaching Churches. *The Teaching Church* explores the problems and possibilities uncovered by the Effective Christian Education study conducted by Search Institute. Written for pastors and Christian education leaders in congregations, the book expands on the survey's findings, presenting new information and analysis, and placing the study in the context of other recent thinking about Christian education. It also contains worksheets and checklists to be used in evaluating a congregation's educational programs, charts and graphs that interpret data effectively, and a faith-maturity index to diagnose the educational competence of a congregation.

African American Church Growth: 12 Principles for Prophetic Ministry Stewart, Carlyle Fielding, III Nashville: Abington Press, 1994. *If farmers do not cultivate their fields, the people in town will die of hunger.* – African Proverb.

In this text, Carlyle Fielding Stewart has provided a convincing and insightful formula for the healthy, responsible, and qualitative growth of all churches and other faith communities that the church and the academy must be adapted to the cultural context which they seek to serve.

Soul Stories: African American Christian Education Wimberly, Anne Streaty Nashville: Abington Press, 1994. This text engages leaders, teachers, and students in a dialogical process of quest and exploration, linking their stories of everyday struggle with Scripture in such a way that Scripture can guide everyday decision making. The first part of the book explores self and world, life events, and life meanings. The latter half of the book prepares teachers and leaders to actually do storytelling, story-linking, and story interpretation. It also guides them in the use of the Bible and the implementation of effective group procedures for teaching.

COME OUT REV. ELDER DARLENE GARNER

Gay by God, Proud by Choice

Sermon delivered by Rev. Elder Darlene Garner at Pride Celebration on June 9, 1996 in Washington, DC

The prophet Nehemiah said to the people, "This day is holy to God; do not mourn or weep...Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to God; and do not be grieved, for the joy of God is your strength" (Nehemiah 8:9a, 10, 12).

My friends, do we hear God's word to us this morning? "This day — Pride Day — is holy to God!" Some of us may be surprised to hear that God has good words for us. Most preachers want us to believe that God would have us hide away in closets of despair until we die from isolation or are supposedly cured in desperation. But the word of God says to me this morning, "Come out and party!"

Come out of your closets and be free in my sunshine. Come out of your despair and dance in my joy. Come out of your self-loathing and march with pride.

It may be difficult for some of us to fully celebrate today. We know that the struggle for respect, equality and justice is not yet won. We will always remember Tyra Hunter (a Washington, DC, transsexual injured in an automobile accident) who was ridiculed by the public servant who was supposed to be there for her rescue. (The Emergency Medical Technician, when discovering that Tyra was anatomically male, taunted and laughed at her rather than treating her injuries. Tyra subsequently died.) We remember our friends and lovers in the military who neither ask nor tell but are booted out anyway. We remember the untold numbers of people who must stay at home today out of fear of public disclosure. We remember the men, women and children who live with and die from inadequate health care. We remember the people in the pulpits and pews of our synagogues, mosques, temples and churches who must leave their sexuality at the door in order to go in and worship. It is hard to forget when we are so often treated with disdain. Yet no matter how difficult it might be for us when we remember, we must celebrate with pride. Not only for our sake but for the sake of those who are not able to be out today.

The prophet tells us to send portions of what we have to those for whom nothing is prepared. Now there are a whole lot of people who are not going to be prepared for us this morning. Just think of the unsuspecting tourist families who will have to go home to their hotels this evening and explain to their children all the sights they are surely going to see.

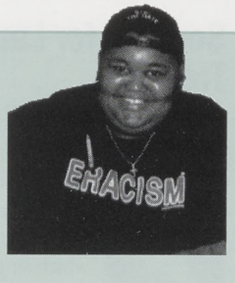
Imagine the confusion of the so-called religious roadside hecklers who are probably going to be somewhere along the route. Their shouts about God's hatred will be drowned out by 50 voices of a queer gospel choir singing about God's love. They're not ready! Nothing in their life has prepared them for what they will encounter today.

And what of those gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered folk along the way who are not quite sure they can ever believe that God loves them. To all of these people, we must send portions of the pride in ourselves and the love from God that we feel here today.

When your feet get tired, walk on anyway for the joy of God is our strength. If you are worried about who might see you, get over it knowing that the hope of God is our courage. And if you think that none of this will make a difference, you're wrong! The love of God is our passion. We shall not give up, give out or give in.

Today we shall not mourn over our oppression. Today we shall not weep from the pain and recriminations of discrimination and rejection. For this day is holy to God. On this day God's Rainbow Nation rises up and goes forth with shouts of glad tidings and great joy: We are gay by God, and proud by choice!

ERACISM



Order Form

Ministries of Diversity in Spiritual Communities, Ramon Flores
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☐ T-Shirt $10 ☐ Tank $10 ☐ Cap $10

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$10 per item, plus shipping ( ) Total Enclosed _____
Make check out to MDISC UFMCC

Phone order: (619) 281-3548 E-mail: aj668@rgfn.epcc.edu

HIV/AIDS TECHNOLOGY

Alert on the Net

UFMCC AIDS Ministry has instituted an AIDS Action Alert program via e-mail. Periodically, UFMCC AIDS Ministry receives action alerts from the AIDS Action Council, the U.S. AIDS National Interfaith Network, the U.S. National Minority AIDS Council, and a variety of political action groups and community based organizations. These action alerts are now being directly forwarded to all persons on the AIDS Alert e-mail list.

UFMCC AIDS Ministry also sends articles of interest to those in HIV/AIDS Ministry over the Internet, and responds to requests for help and resources.

If you are not currently receiving these alerts, and have an e-mail address, please send your request with your e-mail address to UFMCCHQ@AOL.com, and write "Attn: UFMCC AIDS Ministry" in the subject.

Out of respect for the international diversity of the UFMCC, there are currently two AIDS Action Alert lists: one for U.S. residents regarding U.S. legislative issues, the other for those outside the U.S. Many of the action alerts concern issues particular to the United States legislative process, and those outside the U.S. will not receive these notices unless they specifically request them.

HIV/AIDS TECHNOLOGY

Website Q & A

The Body, an interactive HIV/AIDS information site on the World Wide Web, now offers a question and answer page for faith issues related to HIV/AIDS. Rev. Steve Pieters, field director of UFMCC AIDS Ministry, answers questions posed by readers of the web site. Pieters also writes a bi-weekly column on HIV and faith for The Body.

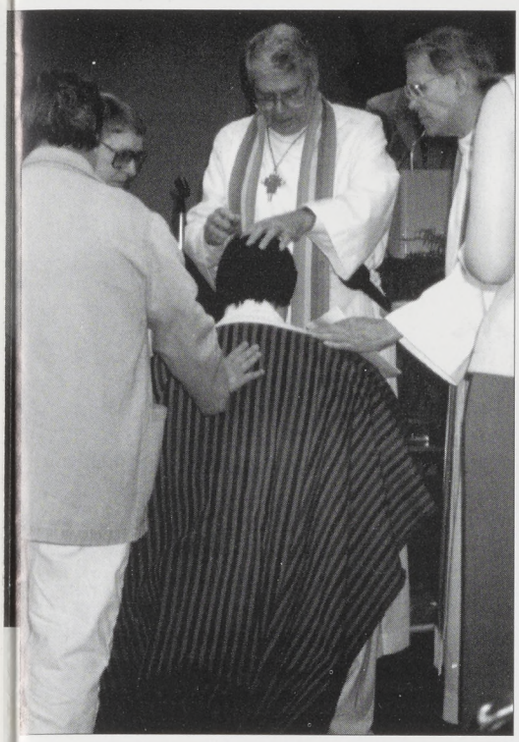
Pieters' columns, as well as the

KEEPING IN TOUCH **JULY 1996**

Keeping in Touch is a monthly publication of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches. We are a church of the lesbian and gay community, open to all. Our mission is to call people to new life through the liberating gospel of Jesus Christ, confront injustice through Christian social action, and create a community of healing and reconciliation. *Keeping in Touch* may be freely copied for distribution in UFMCC. Portions may be reprinted in UFMCC church publications, with attribution. For other distribution, please request permission. Subscriptions are free upon request. Send address changes, news and ideas to: *Keeping in Touch*, 5300 Santa Monica Blvd, #304, Los Angeles, CA 90029; (213) 464-5100. Deadline for each issue: 15th of previous month.

Editorial Board:
Rev. Elder Troy D. Perry, Moderator; Ravi Verma, Director of Administration

Team Members:
Nancy Fackrell, Elsa Martinez, Dana Cagle, Roi Hudson-Anaya.



■ **For the first** time, a service of ordination was held at Gulf Lower Atlantic district conference in Nashville.

Q&A page, can be reached at http://www.thebody.com/pieters/revpiet.html. Other UFMCC AIDS Ministry resources can be accessed at http://www.thebody.com/ufmcc/ufmccix.html.

DISTRICTSGULF LOWER ATLANTIC

Gulf Lower Atlantic Conference Held

The theme for the district conference of the Gulf Lower Atlantic District in Nashville, Tennessee on May 17-19 was "In the Presence of God." District Coordinator Rev. Jay Neely announced that attendance at the Saturday evening service was 270. The host church, MCC Nashville, staged a dance for the delegates and friends Saturday night pool-side at the conference site. Liaison Elder Rev. Don Eastman brought the message Saturday night. Friday worship heard a message from Pastor Kathi Beall, MCC St. Jude's, Wilmington, and Sunday morning Rev. Mona West, dean of Samaritan Religious Institute delivered a sermon titled "18-Wheeler Theology." Music Director, Tim Young of Christ Covenant MCC, Atlanta presented an outstanding program of music for worship including a massed choir Saturday night. For the first time, a service of ordination, under the auspices of the district's Board of Ordained Ministry, was part of the Sunday worship. Four of the twelve persons approved by the board were ordained at that time. Workshops for the conference included Church Growth and Development, College Ministries, Legal Issues Facing Gay and Lesbian Couples, and Grant Writing.

DISTRICTSNORTHWEST

Northwest Ordains 20 Clergy

The highlight of the 1996 Northwest District Conference was the ordination of 20 clergy candidates on Saturday night where 400 friends and family members joined in the celebration. Rev. Janet Suess-Pierce, district coordinator; Elder Larry Rodriguez; Rev. Elder Dr. Freda Smith; Rev. Jay Neely, Gulf Lower Atlantic district coordinator; and Rev. Anne Hulse, chair of the Northwest District Board of Ordained Ministry officiated and Rev. Sue Stackhouse, assistant district coordinator for region A, preached for the service.

"Claiming the Future" was a fitting theme for this year's conference, hosted by the Bay Area Coalition of Churches in San Francisco on May 24-27. The conference featured lay and clergy retreats as well as a variety of excellent workshops and worship services for over 200 registrants. Special guest Rev. Colleen Darraugh, pastor of Harvest MCC in Denton, Texas, preached for the healing service on Sunday night and facilitated workshops throughout the weekend on church growth and development.

A Human Rights Awards Breakfast was also well attended as four outstanding activists were honored. They were: Lynn Duff, college student, journalist, lesbian youth activist and psychiatric abuse survivor who recently visited Haiti where she helped homeless youth establish a radio station and interviewed Prime Minister Aristide; Anthony Turney, executive director of the Names Project which has gained world-wide acclaim; Kiki Whitlock, a Filipino-American transgendered activist; and "Out on the Island," a community political action group working on behalf of GLTB people in the city of Alameda, California.

Northwest District Conference 1997 will be held in Hawaii en route to General Conference in Sydney, Australia.

DISTRICTSMOUNTAINS AND PLAINS

New UFMCC District Formed

Members of both the Mid-Central District and the Western Canadian District gathered on Thursday, May 23, 1996, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, to say "farewell" to the two independent districts and "greetings" to the newest district of the UFMCC: The Mountains and Plains District of North America.

This conference was full of new beginnings for each person in attendance as members of the new district, and also as an example of the potential of breaking down barriers within the UFMCC.

Rev. Mark Williams stated during the opening ceremony that "We must move forward in this new venture together. Claiming our individual past and history, yet be prepared to bring our rich diversity and self into a new district."

The opening ceremony consisted of each church body being called forth and a brief history read regarding each church. Each church had been invited to bring a banner in for the procession. This was a wonderful experience to see the richness of creativity that the Mountains and Plains District has been blessed with.

Rev. Elder Hong Tan served as moderator for the first business session. Rev. Bob Arthur was elected district coordinator by acclamation. Other officers are: Rev. Ken Pilot, assistant district coordinator USA; Rev. Beverely Baptiste, assistant district coordinator Canada; Rev. Mark Williams, clerk; Jack Boren, treasurer; Rev. Gina Hartung, clergy representative; Kathy Slawson, lay representative; and David Sorey, liaison for policy and procedure.

The Board of Ordained Ministry was very busy this year, with 17 people approved for the rite of ordination.

Rev. Bob Arthur concluded the conference with a very challenging sermon entitled "But We've Never Done it That Way." The new district will face many challenges, as it goes forth proclaiming a liberating gospel of Jesus Christ, in ways never done before.

CLASSIFIED

Cost is $15 for the first 25 words or less. Additional words are .70 per word. Numbers and abbreviations count as words. All classifieds must be prepaid in U.S. funds. Deadline is the 15th of month prior to publication. All copy is subject to the approval of the Editorial Board. Appearance of advertising does not imply, nor does it constitute endorsement by UFMCC. Mail ads to Keeping In Touch Classifieds, 5300 Santa Monica Blvd., No. 304, Los Angeles, CA 90029.

Translation Services Correction, spelling and typing of materials from English into Spanish or vice versa. Reasonable prices. Call (805) 488-3147 and leave a message.

Assistant/Associate Pastorate at MCC Las Vegas, NV. The position involves AIDS/home visitation and Administration of bible study/affinity group management. Beginning part-time salary $500.00 per month expected to be full time in future. Provide sacred and secular resume to: MCCLV, 1140 Almond Tree Lane, #302, Las Vegas, NV 89104-3233.

New Work in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, commission status pending, with own sanctuary and fellowship building is seeking experienced Minister to serve growing congregation of eighty-seven members. This is a thirty hour a week position, leading to full time. For more information send resume to: Chairperson, Pastoral Search Committee, 927 Smith Road, Lexington, NC 27292.

Seeking full-time compassionate pastor and spiritual leader, for mid-size Church family in Palm Beach County, Florida. For more information please write: Pastoral Search Committee, Church of Our Savior, P.O. Box 812601, Boca Raton, Florida 33481-2601.

STAFF POSITION AVAILABLE: Maranatha Fellowship MCC, Houston, TX is looking for a dynamic person to work with Cell Group Leaders, provide ongoing leadership training for interns, develop cell groups in a district area with potential for opening a satellite church. 20 hours/week initially with potential for full-time within 6 months. Excellent opportunities for growth and development using the Cell Group Church Model. For an application or more information write: Rev. Janet Parker, Maranatha Fellowship MCC, 3400 Montrose, Suite 600, Houston, TX 77006 or call/fax: (713) 528-6756.

Attention Gay Service Members! Know your legal rights: Say nothing, sign nothing, and get legal help if you are ever investigated. Call Servicemembers Legal Defense Network for confidential counseling; (202) 328-FAIR.

24 HENRY GUESTHOUSE is a serene, non-smoking environment close to everything in San Francisco's Gay Castro District. 1-800-900-5686. (415) 864-5686. FAX: (415) 864-0406.

MCC Boston is seeking applicants for Senior Pastor. We are a small congregation with active lay participation and potential for growth. The position initially is part-time, with expectations of moving to full-time. We are seeking a Pastor committed to inclusiveness and lay participation, who can help us grow and become more involved in the community. For more information write: Pastoral Search Committee, P.O. Box 15590, Kenmore Station, Boston, MA 02215. Deadline for application submissions is Sept. 1, 1996. Women and People of Color are encouraged to apply.

UFMCC General Conference

Sydney, Australia

July 20-25, 1997 – **Just One Year Away!**

Leadership Conference **Registration Form** The Gospel for a Global Generation

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Phones (Day, Evening) _____

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On-Site Registration	$170.00
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Saturday Only	$ 50.00

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